



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

Seib, Charrlotte, Dunne, Michael, Fischer, Jane, & Najman, Jakob M. (2012) Changes to commercial service provision among sex workers from Queensland, Australia. In *International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI) World Congress*, 15-17 October 2012, Melbourne, Australia. (Unpublished)

This file was downloaded from: <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/75352/>

© Copyright 2012 Please consult the authors

Notice: *Changes introduced as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing and formatting may not be reflected in this document. For a definitive version of this work, please refer to the published source:*

CHANGES TO COMMERCIAL SERVICE PROVISION AMONG SEX WORKERS FROM QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA



Charllotte Seib RN MN¹
Michael Dunne BA (Hons) PhD²
Jane Fischer BA MSPD³
Jacob M Najman BA (Hons) PhD⁴

1 School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.
2 School of Public Health, Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.
3 School of Pharmacy, University of Queensland, Pharmacy Australia Centre of Excellence, Brisbane, Australia.
4 Queensland Drug and Alcohol Research and Education Centre, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Background

- ❖The role of commercial sex in facilitating infection transmission is a subject of ongoing empirical enquiry.
- ❖Vaginal sex, fellatio, and hand relief are performed by almost all commercial sex workers irrespective of their work context (1-3).
- ❖Less is known about the variety and extent of ‘non-traditional commercial services that pose a lesser risk of infection.
- ❖Data from limited research in sex workers and their commercial clients suggest that ‘unconventional’ sexual services were relatively common (4-7).

Study Aim

This study sought to examine the supply and demand of a wide range of traditional and non-traditional commercial sexual services among sex workers and their clients from Queensland, Australia.

- 1.The poster explores changes in sexual service provision over time by comparing services from two samples of sex workers interviewed in 1991 and 2003 in Queensland, Australia.
2. This poster also examines “demand” for commercial services from male clients who were recruited from licensed brothels and the premises of private sole-operators in 2003.

Methods

Cross-sectional convenience sampling was used to compare female sex workers in 1991 (n=200, aged 16-46 years) and 2003 (n=247, aged 18-57 years) and from male clients in 2003. The client sample comprised 160 male clients aged between 19 and 72 years.

1991 sample – sex workers - Key informants and Advisory Committee provided information which assisted in the identification of a range of types and locations of sex workers in Queensland. A total of 230 sex workers were surveyed throughout Queensland including 28 male and 2 transgender sex workers (male and transgender sex workers were not included in the final data analysis).

2003 sample – sex workers - Direct and indirect recruitment strategies were employed, contacting sex workers through advertisements in newspapers and visiting their place of work. A total of 247 female sex workers completed the survey.

2003 sample – commercial clients - Licensed brothel clients self-completed a questionnaire either before or after the service. A number of private sole operators asked their clients to volunteer by the private sex workers when they attended their appointment. Overall, 161 male clients participated: they ranged in age from 19 to 72 years and were recruited at licensed brothels (N = 106) or via private sole operators (N = 55).

Results

The samples at both time points were quite diverse in terms of age, country of origin, and family relationships. Compared to the 1991 sample, the 2003 sample was older (M = 26.5, SD = 7.0 compared with M = 32.1, SD = 8.2, $t(444) = 7.64$, $p < .001$) and less likely to have been born in Australia. Women interviewed in 2003 were also more likely to have been married or divorced/separated than the 1991 sample and were about twice as likely have had at least one child.

Demographic characteristics of clients showed that clients of private sole operators were older than men recruited from licensed brothels (M = 39.9, SD =10.5 compared with M = 33.3, SD = 9.8, $t(157) = -4.01$, $p < .001$). Clients of private sole operators were also more likely to be married than men who were recruited in licensed brothels. There were no significant differences in the country of birth or current occupation.

Table 1 Services reported by private, brothel and illegal sex workers in 2003

Variable	1991 (N = 179 ¹)		2003 (N = 247)		χ ²	p
	%	N	%	N		
Vaginal sex	100	179	95	235	8.95	.002
Oral sex	97	173	95	232	1.64	ns
Oral sex from client	68	122	70	173	0.17	ns
Anal sex	12	21	16	40	1.68	ns
Fisting (hand in anus)	1	2	11	26	14.96	<.001
Fingering (vagina or anus)	21	37	45	111	26.96	<.001
Sex toys	40	72	69	169	33.59	<.001
Bondage/discipline	24	43	39	96	10.40	.001
Golden showers (urination)	30	54	43	105	6.76	.009
Manual masturbation (hand relief)	98	175	99	245	1.52	ns
Penis between breasts (Spanish)	59	105	66	164	2.67	ns
Cross-dressing	20	36	41	101	20.54	<.001
Lesbian doubles	31	55	61	149	36.43	<.001
Fantasy/fetish	45	80	68	168	23.21	<.001
Massage	82	147	92	226	8.37	.002
Submission	4	7	18	44	19.04	<.001

Table 2 Sexual services provided by workers (ever) and received by clients (ever)

	Clients of licensed brothel (N = 105)	Licensed brothel worker (N = 103)	Clients of private workers (N = 55)	Private sex workers (N = 102)
Variable	%	%	%	%
Sexual services provided				
Vaginal sex	97	98	87	93
Oral sex	69	97	72	92
Oral sex from client	57	68	56	83
Anal sex	18	18	29	13
Fisting (hand in anus)	9	9	15	13
Fingering (vagina or anus)	39	53	43	37
Sex toys	28	67	50	77
Bondage/discipline	9	29	42	47
Golden showers (urination)	9	34	20	52
Manual masturbation (hand relief)	61	99	60	100
Penis between breasts (Spanish)	46	67	40	69
Cross-dressing	4	35	11	50
Lesbian doubles	26	70	26	50
Fantasy/fetish	19	66	29	65
Massage	69	97	69	87
Submission	5	13	27	20

Moderate consistency (50-74%) Brothel clients reported four acts at this level: Fingering, sex toys, and bondage/discipline. For private clients, six acts were moderately consistent with preferences, including anal intercourse, fisting, rimming, lesbian doubles, and fantasy/fetish.

Low consistency (≥49%) Experiences of brothel clients were considerably less than their preferences for anal intercourse, fisting, golden showers, lesbian doubles, and fantasy/fetish. Among private clients, none of the acts had consistency of less than 50%.

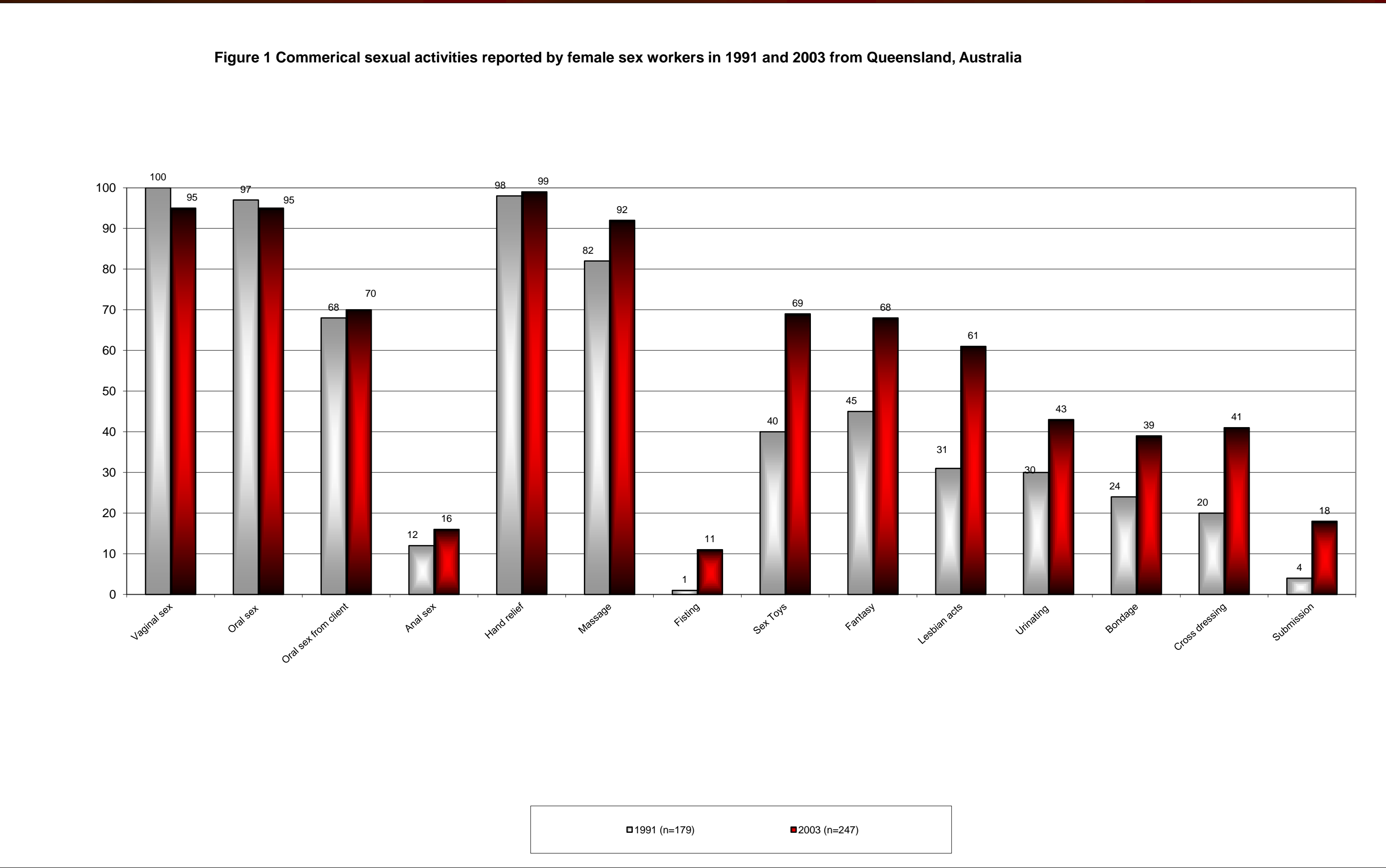
Conclusion

❖ It is not possible to determine if the characteristics of these two samples were representative of sex worker populations in 1991 and 2003. Except for age, country of birth and employment before sex work the samples were similar. Another weakness is that we could not satisfactorily recruit clients of illegal sex workers.

❖ The 2003 sample were more likely to have been employed before entering the sex industry suggesting that sex work may be an occupational choice among other choices. Although the types of sex workers may have changed over time, sex work continues to be a viable and deliberate option for the participants in this study.

❖ Many commercial clients said they would like to pay for anal sex. Despite this apparent demand, the majority of brothel clients who prefer these acts have not yet paid for them (e.g., anal sex, fisting, and golden showers) . The situation with private sole operators is different; although few private sex workers perform this act, many of their clients who preferred anal intercourse had paid for it at least once. This may indicate sub-specialisation among some private workers.

❖ Undoubtedly, the sex industry has professionalised and now includes more sophisticated and specialized suppliers. As with any commercial business, the diversification of services is largely driven with client demand, with the ‘menu’ being generally broader than the majority of client preferences. However, although client’s demands for particular commercial sexual services seems to have been met, with regard to anal sex and anal play, supply has failed to meet client demand.



Funding was provided by the Prostitution Licensing Authority. Finally, I would like to thank the men and women who have given their time and participated in this research.

1. Jenkins C, Rahman H. Rapidly changing conditions in the brothels of Bangladesh: Impact on HIV/STD. *AIDS Education and Prevention* 2002;14(3):97-106.
2. Weber A, Boivin J, Blais L, Haley N, Roy E. HIV risk profile and prostitution among female street youths. *Journal of Urban Health* 2002;79(4):525-35.
3. Jeal N, Salisbury C. Health needs and service use of parlour-based prostitutes compared with street-based prostitutes: A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 2007;114:875-81.
4. Green S, Goldberg D, P C, Fischer M, Thomson A, Carr S, et al. Female streetworker-prostitutes in Glasgow: A descriptive study of their lifestyle. *AIDS Care* 1993;5(3):321-36.
5. Perkins R, Lovejoy E. Healthy and unhealthy life styles of female brothel workers and call girls (private sex workers) in Sydney. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 1996;20(5):512-6.
6. Louie R, Crofts N, Pyett P, Snow J. Project client call: Men who pay for sex in Victoria. Melbourne: Macfarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research, 1998.
7. Pitts M, Smith A, Grierson J, O'Brien M, Misson S. Who pays for sex and why? An analysis of social and motivational factors associated with male clients of sex workers. *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 2004;33(4):353-58.